

DRAFT

Coordinated Transportation Plan

for the Mid-Region Council of Governments' Area

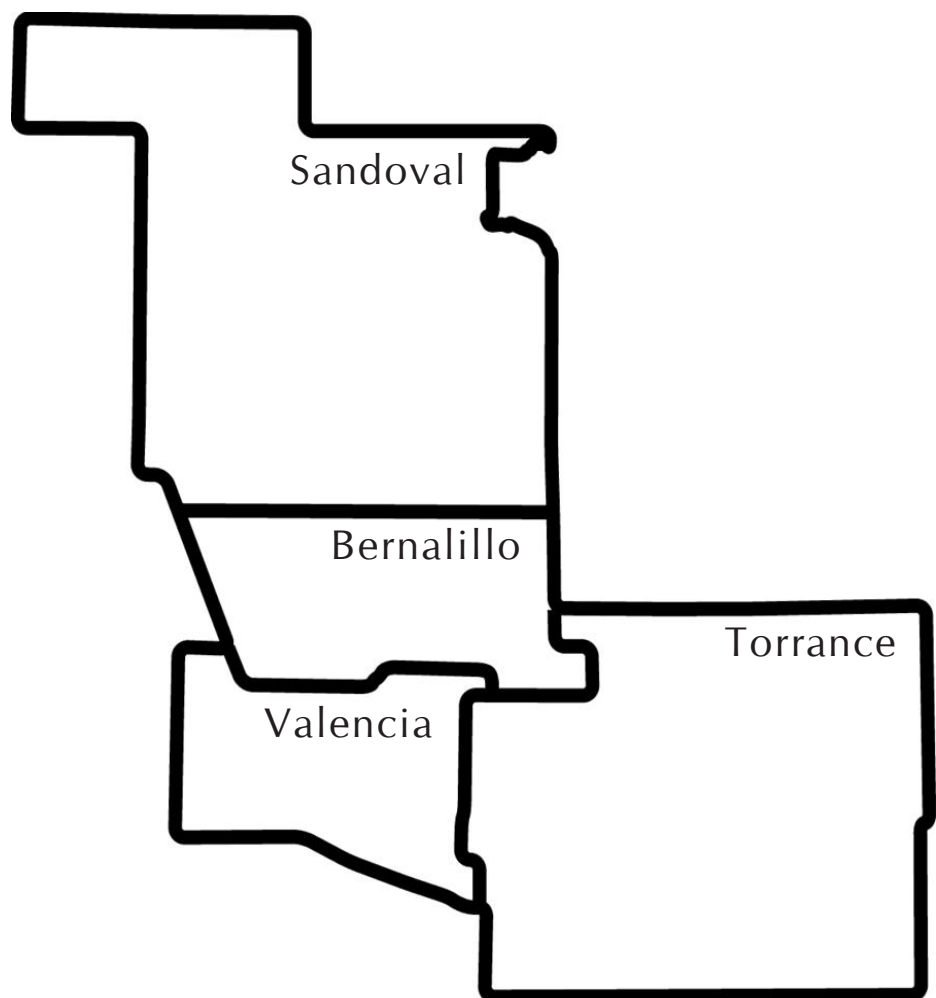


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PREFACE

Personal mobility is something easily taken for granted. For many people, this means merely starting the car or walking to the subway. However, an increasing number of Americans are unable to get to work, run errands, or access medical care simply because they do not have reliable transportation. In 2000, the number of older adults was more than 30 million, and is expected to double by 2030. Almost 54 million people were reported to have disabilities.

Many are among the “transportation-disadvantaged” individuals who cannot operate a vehicle because of medical conditions, disabilities or other limitations. In addition there are others who are unable to afford their own automobile, or live in areas without public transportation options¹.

Individual mobility has always been recognized as a vital element of American society and our economic growth. The “individual mobility”, however, that has been the focus of federal, state, and local policies and financing has generally been the mobility of individuals who own or have access to vehicles or who have the capability of walking to or driving to a public transit service. Through legislative and regulatory actions the planning and funding process for the design, construction, and maintenance of this transportation infrastructure has evolved into a fairly coordinated system.

The transportation needs of individuals who do not own or who do not have access to a vehicle, or who are not able to get to a public transit service have not been ignored. Policies and funding directed at the mobility needs of these individuals are in place and have been for many years. What has not happened at the federal level, and at most state and local levels, is the development of a coordinated approach to the planning, funding, and delivery of these services.

Federal Interagency Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility

At the federal level there are “62 federal [transportation] programs [that] are spread through 8 different departments. Most federal programs are administered in 4 departments – 23 programs in the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), 15 programs in the Department of Labor (DOL), 8 programs in the Department of Education (DOH), and 6 programs in the Department of Transportation (DOT). Ten other programs are housed in the Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Veterans Affairs (VA), Agriculture and Interior.”²

Recognizing the need for a better approach to providing these transportation services, President Bush issued Executive Order 13330 – Human Service Transportation Coordination – on February 24, 2004. This Executive Order established the “Interagency Transportation Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility”. The responsibilities of this Council are:

¹ “Human Service Transportation Coordination, Executive Order 13330, 2005, Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility

² “A Legislator’s Guide to Coordinated Human Service Transportation”, National Conference for State Legislatures, October 2004

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“(a) promote interagency cooperation and the establishment of appropriate mechanisms to minimize duplication and overlap of Federal programs and services so that transportation-disadvantaged persons have access to more transportation services;

(b) facilitate access to the most appropriate, cost-effective transportation services within existing resources;

(c) encourage enhanced customer access to the variety of transportation and resources available;

(d) formulate and implement administrative, policy, and procedural mechanisms that enhance transportation services at all levels; and

(e) develop and implement a method for monitoring progress on achieving the goals of this order.³

“United We Ride” is the name used by the Council to refer to the various activities that are being undertaken to implement this coordination program.

On October 1, 2006, this Council issued the following “Final Policy Statement - Coordinated Human Service Transportation Planning”:

“Member agencies of the Federal Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility resolve that federally-assisted grantees that have significant involvement in providing resources and engage in transportation delivery should participate in a local coordinated human services transportation planning process and develop plans to achieve the objectives to reduce duplication, increase service efficiency and expand access for the transportation disadvantaged populations as stated in Executive Order 13330.”

This Council will issue additional “Final Policy Statements” on various aspects of federal policies as they related to the coordination of human services transportation.

Safe, Affordable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)

Every five to six years federal policies and a multi-year budget for surface transportation (roads, rail, transit, and ports) are developed by Congress and the executive branch. The Safe, Affordable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) 2005 – 2009, was signed by President Bush on August 10, 2005. This legislation builds upon the two previous authorization bills, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21).

SAFETEA-LU contains eleven titles:

³ Federal Register, Vol. 69, No. 38, Thursday, February 26, 2004

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Title I	Federal-Aid Highways
Title II	Highway Safety
Title III	Public Transportation
Title IV	Motor Carrier Safety
Title V	Research
Title VI	Transportation Planning and Project Delivery
Title VII	Hazardous Materials Transportation
Title VIII	Transportation Discretionary Spending Guarantee
Title IX	Rail Transportation
Title X	Miscellaneous Provisions
Title XI	Highway Reauthorization and Excise Tax Simplification

SAFETEA-LU Title III Section 3012, Formula Grants for Special Needs of Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities; Section 3018, Job Access and Reverse Commute Formula Grants; and Section 3019, New Freedom Program require that “each grant recipient under [these] section[s] shall certify that – (i) the projects selected were derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan; and (ii) the plan was developed through a process that included representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human service providers and participation by the public.”⁴

The “Coordinated Transportation Plan for Sandoval, Bernalillo, Valencia and Torrance Counties” that you are reviewing is a fulfillment of this requirement.

Federal Transit Administration

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is one of the ten modal administrations within the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT). The FTA is charged with developing policies and procedures consistent with federal legislation to provide financial assistance for public transportation systems. Federal transit laws are codified at Title 49, United States Code, Chapter 53.

Formula Grants For Special Needs of Elderly Individuals And Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310)

The FTA apportions amounts appropriated for this program to the states based on an administrative formula that considers the number of elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities in each state. These funds can be used for the planning, designing, and carrying out of public transportation capital projects that meet the special needs of elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities.

Section 5310 funds are administered by the states. A state may allocate the funds apportioned to it to:

- a. a private non-profit organization, if public transportation service provided by state and local governmental authorities under Section 5310 (a)(1) is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate; or

⁴ Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, Public Law 109-59

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b. a governmental entity that:

(1) is approved by the state to coordinate services for elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities; or

(2) certifies that there are not any non-profit organizations readily available in the area to provide the special services.

Job Access and Reverse Commute Formula Grants (Section 5316)

The goal of this program is to improve access to transportation services for welfare and eligible low-income individuals who are going to employment and employment-related activities. This program also supports reverse commute projects designed to transport residents of urbanized areas and other than urbanized areas to suburban employment opportunities. Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) funds are apportioned as follows:

a. 60% of the funds are distributed among designated recipients in urbanized areas with a population of 200,000 or more, in the ratio that the number of eligible low-income individuals and welfare recipients in each such urbanized area bears to the number of eligible low-income individuals and welfare recipients in all such urbanized areas;

b. 20% of the funds are distributed among the states, in the ratio that the number of eligible low-income individuals and welfare recipients in urbanized areas with a population of 200,000 in each state bear to the number of eligible low-income individuals and welfare recipients in urbanized areas with a population of less than 200,000 in all states; and

c. 20% of the funds are distributed among the states, in the ratio that the number of eligible low-income individuals and welfare recipients in other than urbanized areas in each state bears to the number of eligible low-income individuals and welfare recipients in other than urbanized areas in all states.

Job Access and Reverse Commute funds for urbanized areas under 200,000 in population and for nonurbanized areas are administered by a state agency designed by the governor. For urbanized areas over 200,000 in population this program is administered by a designated recipient.

New Freedom Program (Section 5317)

The New Freedom Program is a new program authorized in SAFETEA-LU to support new public transportation services and public transportation alternatives beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. These funds are apportioned in the following manner:

a. 60% of the funds are apportioned among designated recipients (as defined in section 5307(a)(2)) for urbanized areas with a population of 200,000 or more, in the ratio that the number of individuals with disabilities in each such urbanized area bears to the number of individuals with disabilities in all such urbanized areas;

b. 20% of the funds are apportioned among the states, in the ratio that the number of individuals with disabilities in urbanized areas with a population of less than 200,000 in

each state bears to the number of individuals with disabilities in urbanized areas with a population of less than 200,000 in all states; and

c. 20% of the funds are apportioned among the states, in the ratio that the number of individuals with disabilities in other than urbanized areas in each state bears to the number of individuals with disabilities in other than urbanized areas in all states.

New Freedom funds for urbanized areas under 200,000 in population and for nonurbanized areas are administered by a state agency designated by the governor. For urbanized areas over 200,000 in population the program is administered by a designated recipient.

SAFETEA-LU Authorized Funding Levels For The Elderly Individuals And Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310), Job Access and Reverse Commute (Section 5316) and the New Freedom (Section 5317) Programs

The Safe, Affordable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users is an “authorization” bill. This legislation establishes requirements for how transportation funds are spent and sets the authorized spending ceiling for the various transportation programs. For the FTA program, the funds authorized in SAFETEA-LU are not available to eligible FTA recipients until these funds are appropriated, on an annual basis, by Congress, and approved by the president. For example, in year one of SAFETEA-LU state X is authorized for \$150,000 for program Y. State X, however, does not automatically receive these funds. An appropriation bill that contains specific language directing that \$150,000 in program Y funds be apportioned to state X has to be approved by Congress and signed by the president before state X receives these funds.

The following table shows the authorized funding levels for the above programs for the state of New Mexico and the Albuquerque metropolitan area.⁵ Presently (February 1, 2007), the U.S. Department of Transportation is being funded by a “Continuing Resolution.” The effect of this Resolution is that the 2006 and 2007 federal fiscal year program funding levels are identical. The effect that this reduction in 2007 federal fiscal year program funding levels will have on the 2008 and 2009 funding amounts is unknown. The funds administered by the New Mexico Department of Transportation are for all of New Mexico, except for the Albuquerque metropolitan area.

⁵ Federal Transit Administration, January and February 2006 revised authorized funding levels, and February 3, 2006, Federal Register Notice, Part II Department of Transportation..

SAFETEA-LU Authorized Funding Levels

Federal Fiscal Year	New Mexico Department of Transportation				Albuquerque Area	Metropolitan
	Section 5310	JARC	New Freedom		JARC	New Freedom
2006	\$779,673	\$731,193	\$260,056		\$326,277	\$147,490
2007	\$779,673	\$731,193	\$260,056		\$326,277	\$147,490
2008	\$881,152	\$1,249,971	\$468,469		\$372,561	\$167,125
2009	\$922,070	\$1,318,079	\$495,238		\$392,861	\$176,675

United We Ride – New Mexico

As a response to both the renewed federal initiative to increase the coordination of public transit and human service transportation services and the strong desire to improve the accessibility and cost efficiency of providing of these services, the New Mexico Intrastate Agency Coordinating Human Services Transportation Committee was formed in late 2003. The purpose of this committee is to provide support and direction for the development of an organizational structure for a statewide coordinated transportation services system. The results of this effort will be the recommendations for:

1. An organizational structure for the oversight of a statewide coordinated transportation system; and
2. The roles and responsibilities of various entities at the state, regional and local levels.

CHAPTER 1 WHAT IS A COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT – HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN?

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) is the federal legislation that establishes funding levels and project requirements for surface transportation programs.⁶ This Act states that three of the program funds administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) can only be used to assist projects that “were derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan.” The FTA programs affected are:

1. Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310)
2. Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) (Section 5316)
3. New Freedom (Section 5317)

The Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities program provides funding to States for capital projects to assist in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and persons with disabilities.

The Job Access and Reverse Commute program provides funding to States and designated recipients to support the development and maintenance of job access projects designed to transport welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals to and from jobs and activities related to their employment. This program also supports reverse commute projects designed to transport residents of urbanized areas and other than urbanized areas to suburban employment opportunities.

The New Freedom program provides funds for new public transportation services and public transportation alternatives beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The SAFETEA-LU does not define the elements of a coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. The FTA in the September 6, 2006, Federal Register⁷ published a “Coordinated Planning Guidance for FY 2007.” This guidance listed the minimum criteria for a coordinated transportation plan:

1. An assessment of available services
2. An assessment of needs
3. Strategies to address gaps for target populations

The responsible entity(ies) for developing a coordinated transportation plan is determined by population. For an area that exceeds 200,000 in population, the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and the public transit agency(ies) are to cooperate in the development of the plan. The state is responsible for the plan for areas that are 200,000 or under in population.

⁶ See the “Preface” to this document for summary information regarding SAFETEA-LU and the Federal Transit Administration programs that are affected by the coordinated transportation plan requirements.

⁷ Federal Register, Vol. 71, No. 172

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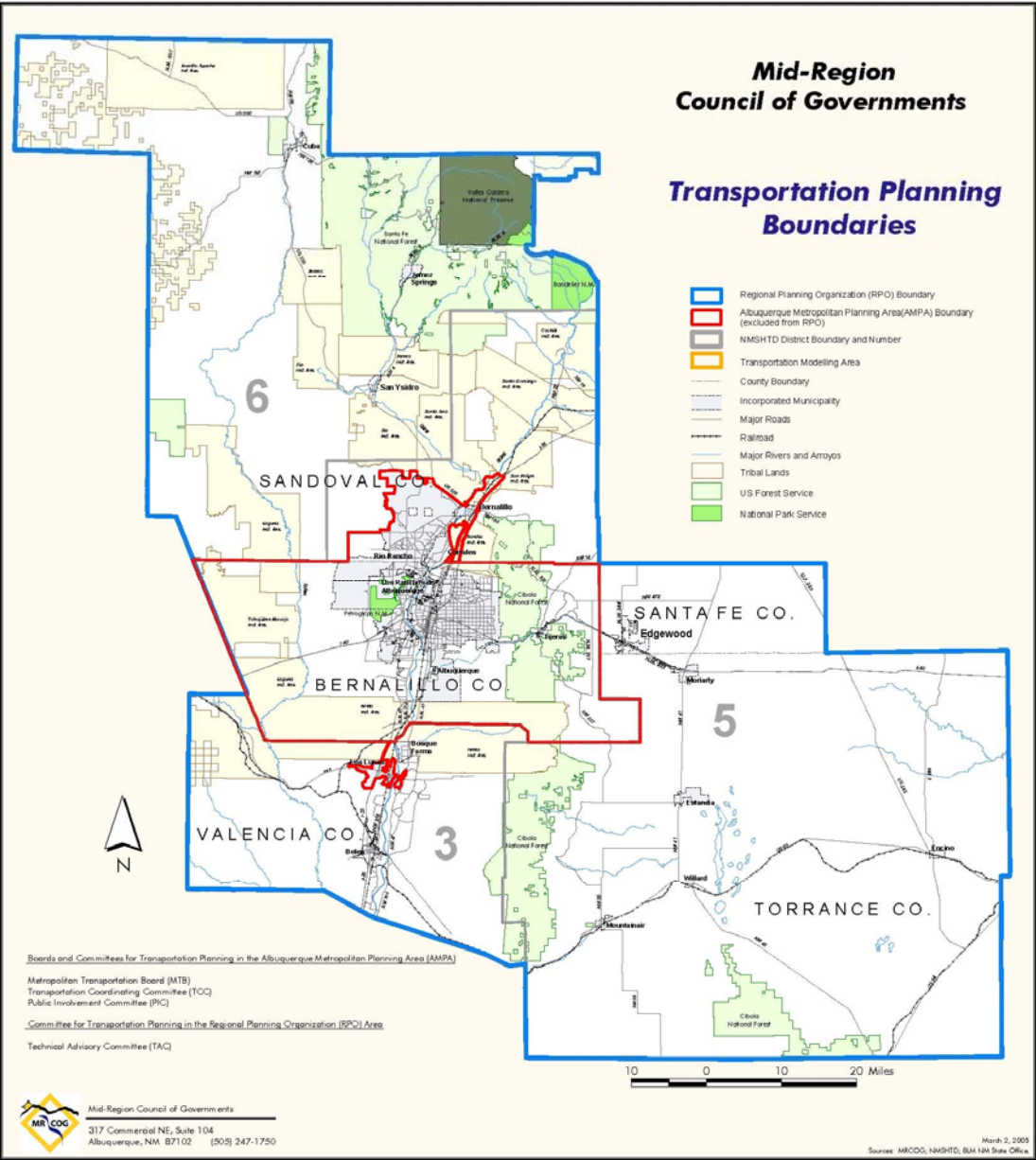
The coordinated public transit – human services transportation plan that is presented in this document covers the four-county area of Sandoval, Bernalillo, Valencia and Tarrant. See Figure 1.

These four counties represent the travel area addressed in this coordinated transportation plan. Based on FTA definitions these four counties contain an urban area that is greater than 200,000 in population (the Albuquerque metropolitan area), and several other areas under 200,000 in population. To avoid duplication of work efforts, the New Mexico Department of Transportation has agreed that the final coordinated transportation plan will apply to all entities within this four-county area.

This draft coordinated transportation plan is being developed with the active participation of individuals from numerous entities from funding agencies; fund recipients; public, non-profit, and for-profit transportation providers; pueblos, advocacy groups, and managed care organizations. A compilation of these entities is provided below.

Adelante Development Center
American Association of Retired People
ARCA spell out
Area Agency on Aging
 Albuquerque/Bernalillo County
City of Albuquerque:
 ABQ RIDE
 Department of Senior Affairs
City of Belen
 Mid Rio Grande RSVP / Transit Department
City of Rio Rancho
 Rio Transit
County of Bernalillo
 Public Works Division
County of Sandoval
 Public Works Division
 Community Services Division
County of Tarrant
 Tarrant County Project Office (TCPO TO GO) Transit
County of Valencia
 Older Americans Program
 Planning Division
Go Fors Inc. Too
Independent Living Resource Center
Jewish Family Services

Figure1



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Lovelace Health Plan

Molina Salud

New Mexico Commission for the Blind

New Mexico Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women

Team Works

New Mexico Department of Aging and Long-Term Services

Office of the Secretary

Area Agency on Aging

Office of Indian Affairs

Elderly and Disabled Division

New Mexico Department of Education

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

New Mexico Department of Labor

New Mexico Department of Transportation

Office of the Secretary

Native American Liaison

Transit and Rail Bureau

New Mexico Department of Human Services

Medical Assistance Division

Income Support Division

New Mexico's Governor's Commission on Disabilities

New Mexico Office of Workforce Training and Development

Presbyterian Medical Services

Presbyterian Health Plan

Protection and Advocacy

Village of Los Lunas: Los Lunas Transit

Pueblo of Isleta

Pueblo of Laguna

Safe Ride Services

Superior Medical Transportation

Value Options of New Mexico

Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico

CHAPTER 2 DEVELOPMENT OF THE COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN (CTP) – HISTORY AND PROCESS

Background

On March 15, 2006, the FTA released interim guidance for FY06 and information on the Coordinated Plan.

Meetings

In April 2006, staff from ABQ Ride and MRCOG began meeting to discuss the inclusion of stakeholders in the development of a Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan (CTP). To maximize productivity and to minimize the number of meetings members would have to attend, staff decided to merge the research and efforts of the United We Ride (UWR) committee (including the research conducted by their consultant, Nelson/Nygaard) with the research and efforts of the CTP committee.

In all activities, staff focused on the transportation needs of elderly, disabled, and low-income residents, as required by the interim guidance. They also focused on residents of the four-county area (Bernalillo, Sandoval, Tarrant, Valencia), since agencies in this region have been coordinating transportation for some years.

In May 2006, staff decided to use the 2000 Area-wide Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Plan as the basis for the JARC information to be included in the draft of the CTP. Staff anticipated that an initial CTP would be submitted for approval in 2007 and that this plan would be updated on a regular basis as needed.

In May 2006 staff also developed a list of potential committee members and invited them to join the CTP committee. Future meetings and agendas were also discussed.

In addition to updating the JARC Plan, staff decided to include the work of Nelson/Nygaard, the UWR consultant, in the CTP. This report identifies current service provider, current funding, user eligibility requirements, and service gap information required by FTA. They also decided to develop the CTP, prioritize efforts, and then develop the competitive process to focus on the prioritized efforts.

The first CTP meeting took place on June 28. MRCOG, Nelson/Nygaard, and ABQ Ride presented information on SAFETEA-LU regulations and the Interim Guidance for Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities, JARC, and New Freedom Grants for FY 2006. Nelson/Nygaard also presented base line information on public transit and human service transportation in the four counties for the target populations, and ABQ Ride presented 2006 updates to the JARC Plan.

At the July 11 meeting, the committee reviewed the two transportation strengths, two transportation challenges, and two transportation gaps for each agency. We also recorded additional comments from new participants. We again discussed the requirements and regulations involved in producing a CTP. It was explained that this process will involve

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three populations (elderly, disabled, low-income) in four counties, each with different funding sources, and that we were addressing requirements for UWR, the CTP, and for statewide planning. Members were asked to join one of five subcommittees to address transportation needs for each target population and compile an inventory of existing transportation resources. Members agreed to record their organization's funding constraints and identify additional stakeholders not currently represented on this committee.

The full committee met on July 29 to review "gaps," and to discuss some funding restrictions and constraints. Members agreed that the coordination of low-income, elderly, and disabled transportation would positively impact transportation for everyone. The group also discussed the need to develop a transportation resource directory.

Subsequently, the committee addressed gaps in senior transportation funding and identified two problems: 1) the policies agencies have to help seniors, and 2) the funding constraints and barriers within agencies that affect how they run the services. Several members volunteered to join a subcommittee to address these and other issues.

On July 26, MRCOG staff emailed a Nelson/Nygaard presentation, containing preliminary information compiled from the March/April interviews to all committee members.

On August 8, Lisa McNiven of the NM Governor's Commission on Disability made a presentation detailing the barriers the disabled population face in accessing transportation.

Following her presentation, staff discussed the subcommittees and volunteers for subcommittees. There were five subcommittees: 1) aging/elderly; 2) resource directory; 3) disabled; 4) low-income/TANF; 5) report.

On September 6, FTA released final guidance for FY07 implementation and notice of availability of proposed circulars.

The CTP committee met on September 13, 2006. We had two guest speakers: Kathryn Karnowski who addressed transportation needs of the TANF/low-income individuals and Gino Rinaldi who spoke about senior/elderly transportation needs.

Two major issues were addressed. 1) Individuals may be members of more than one population sector, compounding their transportation problems. For example, if a person is elderly and disabled, his/her transportation concerns and potential solutions might be more difficult than if s/he were a member of one population only. 2) In addition, regulations governing the provision of transportation may vary from county to county, or municipality to municipality. This difference could make transportation from one county into another county very difficult.

On September 25, the CTP committee met, and members from the five subcommittees reported briefly on the status of their subcommittees.

- Paul Lucero gave an update on the TANF/low-income subcommittee. One member comment: Could some low-income people 'fall through the cracks'? Homeless and

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low-income children may; their families (20% of children are being raised by seniors) may not be able to provide money for their transportation.

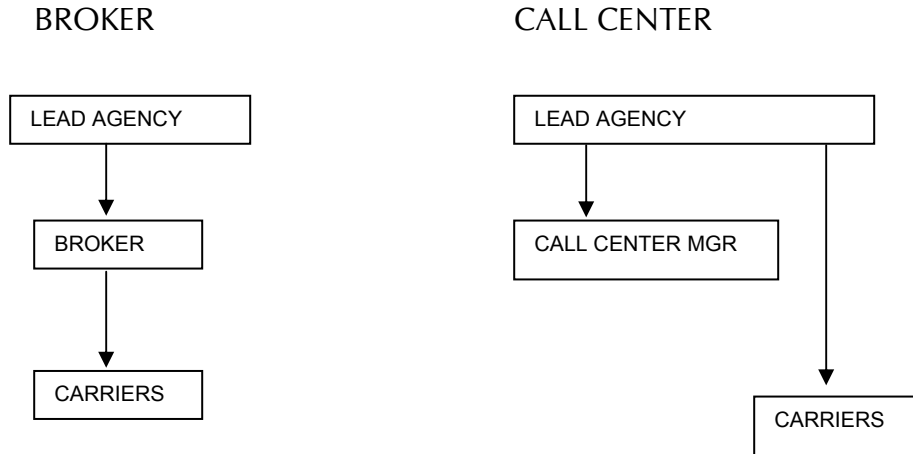
- The disability subcommittee identified overlapping services and also gaps in service. In their reports, Nelson/Nygaard will have a list of available services.
- Transportation is especially challenging for the elderly-aging population in the rural areas. Many people need to get to Albuquerque and Rio Rancho for medical services and for other rural to urban trips. Members said that there are efforts to coordinate transportation on several fronts. In addition, each county has a Community Health Improvement Council to use as a resource for identifying and coordinating transportation.
- The resource directory subcommittee developed a format that will be used to compile and list transportation resources. Members also expressed the need for county maps identifying transportation routes with county transportation resources listed on the reverse side.
- The report subcommittee has developed a format for the CTP report.

It was also made clear that there is limited federal funding available. Subcommittees must analyze existing resources, decide if transportation needs are being met/partially met/not met, decide to what degree services can be coordinated, determine gaps, and prioritize needs/projects to be funded.

On September 27, members received a memo about subcommittee membership, information on federal funding, future meetings, draft report needs, and subcommittee duties for the next few meetings.

The next CTP meeting was held at the Alvarado Transportation Center on October 31. Will Rodman from Nelson/Nygaard gave a power point presentation on the Task 2 findings. Will discussed community transportation in the MRCOG region, some pertinent transportation findings, and three alternative coordination strategies. His diagram illustrates the differences between a broker and a call center model.

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In response to a question about different funding streams, Will talked about 'silo' funding. 'Silo' funding refers to specific funding streams to support services for specific populations. With silo funding, there could be several vehicles dedicated to a specific population going to the same place to pick up just 1-2 people per van. The alternative would be to share vans and commingle services.

One committee member asked how we secure the necessary commitment from agencies that provide or need transportation. This cooperation will make or break the system selected. Will indicated that we might need State and regional oversight and coordination i.e. the four-county area requiring participating agencies to sign joint memorandum of understanding (MOU) to accomplish this task.

The resource directory subcommittee has reviewed databases and talked with representatives from database providers (especially SHARE Network, County Health Councils). The subcommittee is considering alternate models as the basis for our directory, potential on-line providers, and how the contractual relationship should be structured. They have also identified the need for agencies/organizations to commit to regularly updating the databases.

The subcommittees continued to meet to discuss needs, gaps, priorities, and transportation resources.

CHAPTER 3 BACKGROUND DEMOGRAPHICS

Objectives and Methodology

The intention of this work effort was to provide a better understanding of the public transit – human service transportation services, hereafter referred to as “community transportation services”, and funding that exists within the four-county study area. The public transit services for which data was obtained were the “demand response” services; an individual needs to call the transit provider to make a reservation for a ride. The summary thus identifies the more prominent transportation services that are the focus of the coordinated transportation efforts, how they are provided, to whom they are provided, where and when they are provided (and any specific policies that limit prospective coordination), how they are funded, and any service duplications or gaps.

The methodology employed to collect and synthesize this information was primarily conducted through a review of past studies and a series of in-person and telephone interviews with 20 organizations identified by the consulting team of Nelson\Nygaard and MRCOG. These organizations represented several different providers of community transportation within the four-county study area. They included state-level human service agencies and medical care organizations, county-level human service departments, municipal transit departments, private human service agencies, and private transportation providers. The majority of these organizations are involved with providing or funding community transportation services, in one or more of the following ways:

- They directly operate community transportation services.
- They use contractors / enrolled providers to provide community transportation services.
- They distribute federal and state funding that is ultimately used to provide community transportation services.

For these organizations, a questionnaire was e-mailed to the designated contact person for him/her to complete. Most responded with fully or partially completed questionnaires. Follow-up telephone calls were made as needed to complete the information. Please note that this information is not intended to reflect a comprehensive inventory of all community transportation programs and resources that may operate within the region.

Summaries of these programs and services are presented in Chapter 4 of this document. Chapter 5 reviews instances of service duplication and unmet needs. Chapter 6 presents information on the funding sources used for these services. Chapter 7 discusses current and past instances of coordination between/among these programs/services. In addition, a description of each program/service describing that organization’s service structure, overall funding, clientele served, and coordination efforts, is also included as Appendix C.

Background Demographic of Study Area

Prior to documenting the existing services and funding, it is appropriate to first look at the demographic profile of the four counties in the study area. This is provided in Figure 2-1 below.

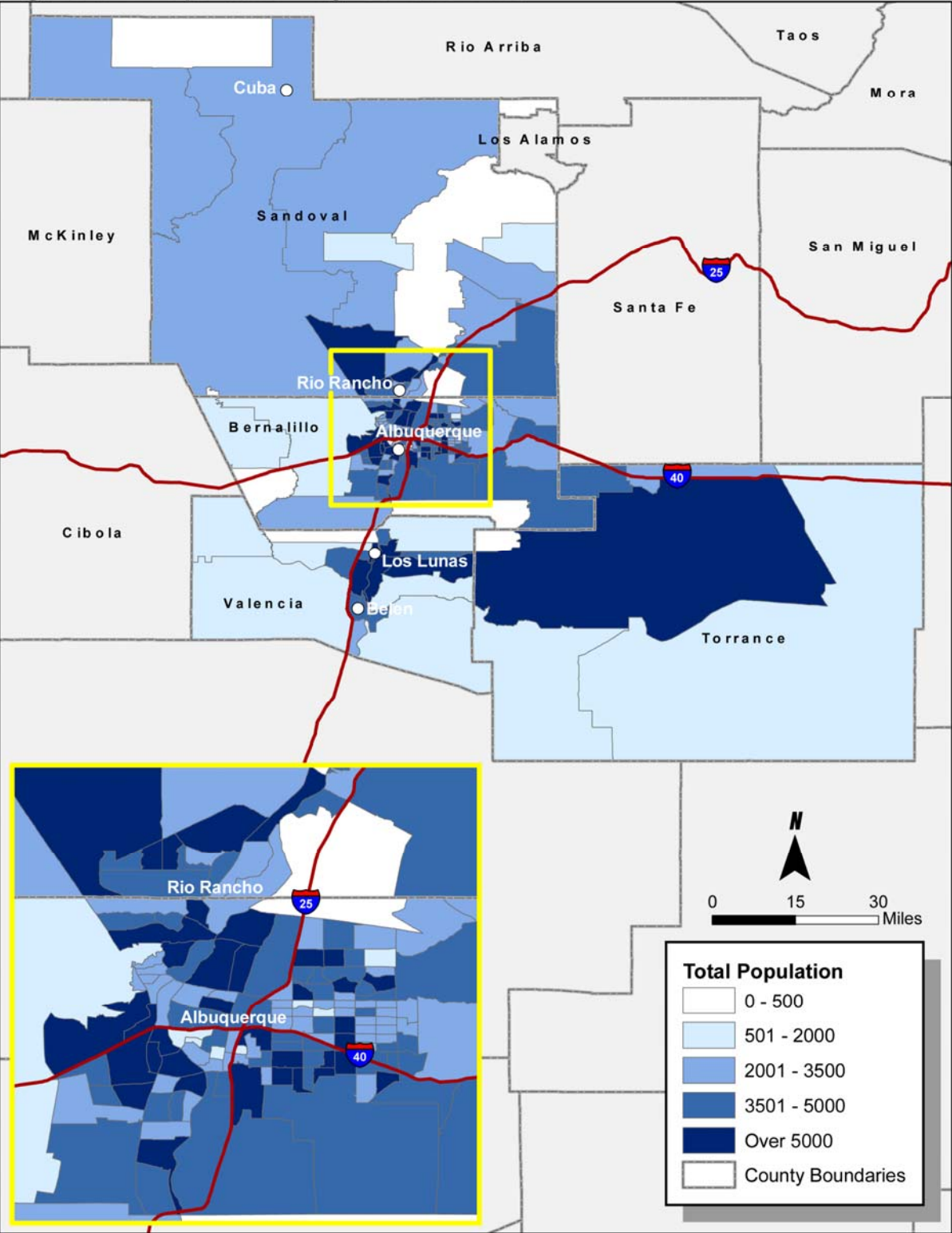
Figure 3-1 Demographic Profile

	Bernalillo	Sandoval	Torrance	Valencia
Total population	556,678	89,908	16,911	66,152
% of state population	31%	6%	1%	3.6%
Total persons 65 +	65,156	9,542	1,647	6,723
% of total county population	11.5%	10.6%	9.7%	10.2%
Total persons with disability	100,311	15,548	3,726	12,538
% of total county population	18%	17%	22%	19%
Total persons in poverty	74,987	10,847	3,106	10,806
% of total county population	13.5%	12%	18%	16%
Language other than English spoken at home	29.5%	31.8%	26.2%	33.9%
Square miles	1,166	3,709	3,345	1,068

Source: U.S. Census 2000

Maps of the region illustrating general population and senior, low-income, and disabled populations, respectively, are presented in Figures 3-2 through 3-5. This four-county region's population of 729,649 accounts for 41 percent of New Mexico's total population and 8 percent of the state's square mileage.

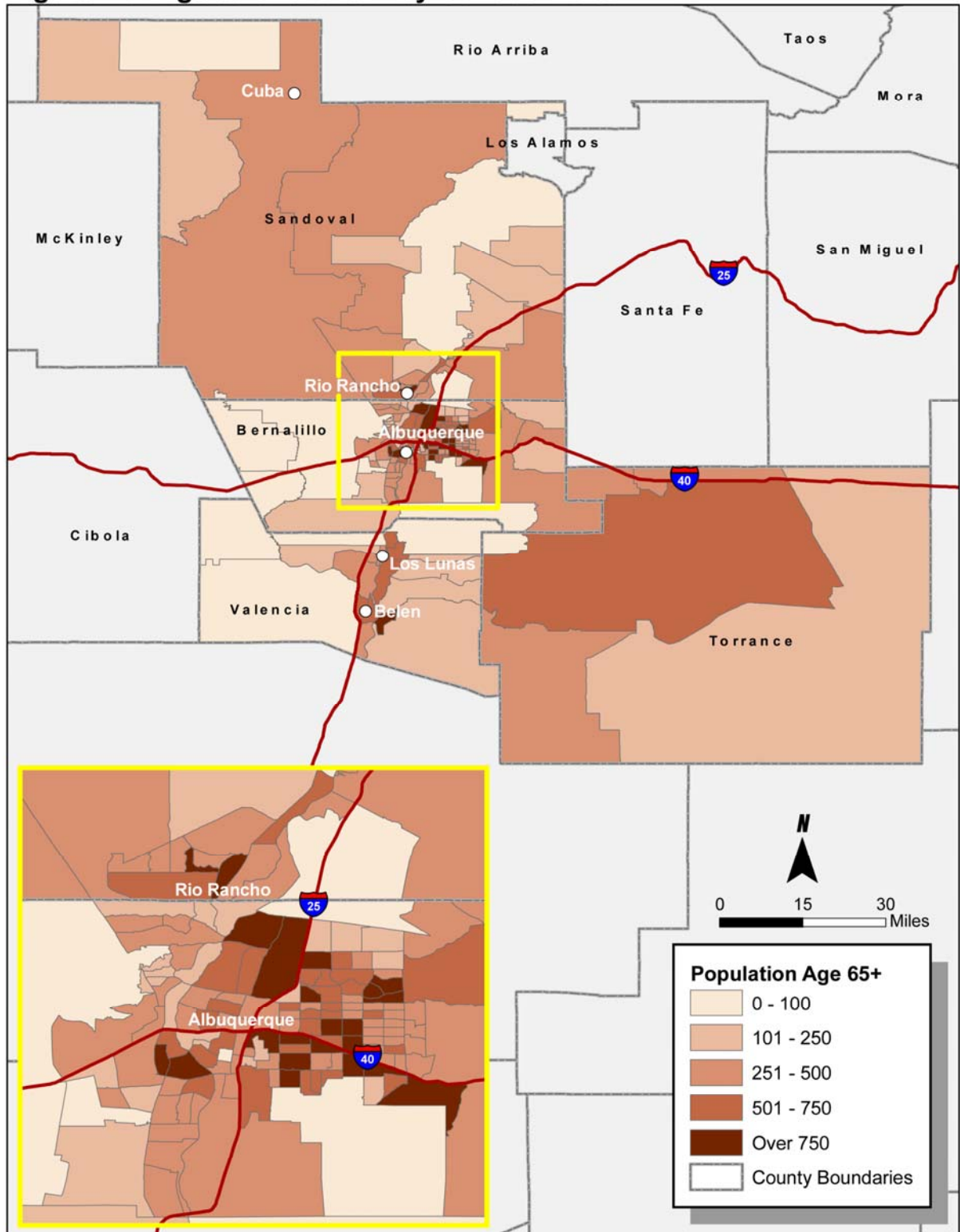
Figure 3-2 Population - by Census Tract



Nelson|Nygaard
consulting associates

GIS Data Source: ESRI, US Census 2000, RGIS
Location: Central New Mexico

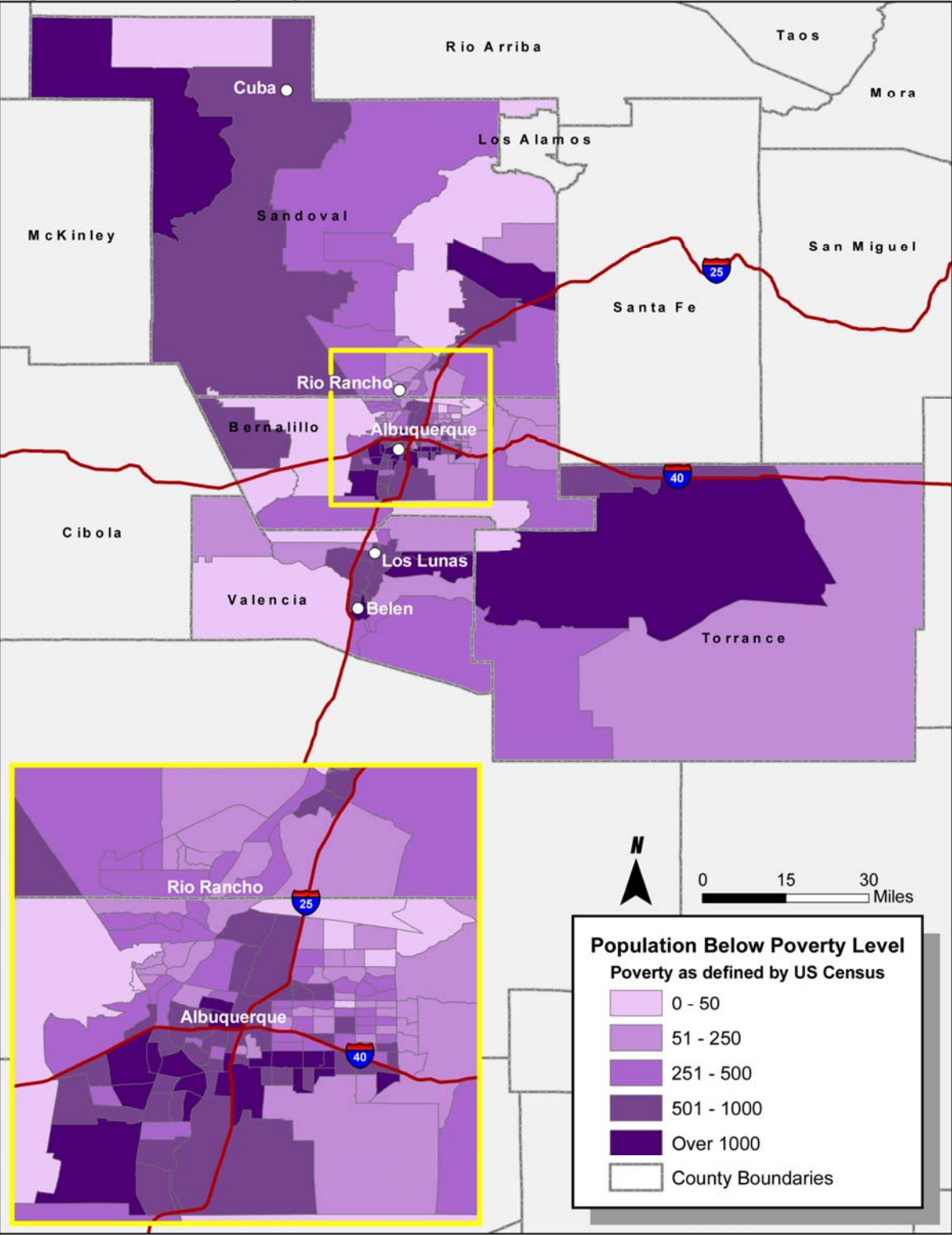
Figure 3-3 Age 65 and Over - by Census Tract



Nelson Nygaard
consulting associates

GIS Data Source: ESRI, US Census 2000, RGIS
Location: Central New Mexico

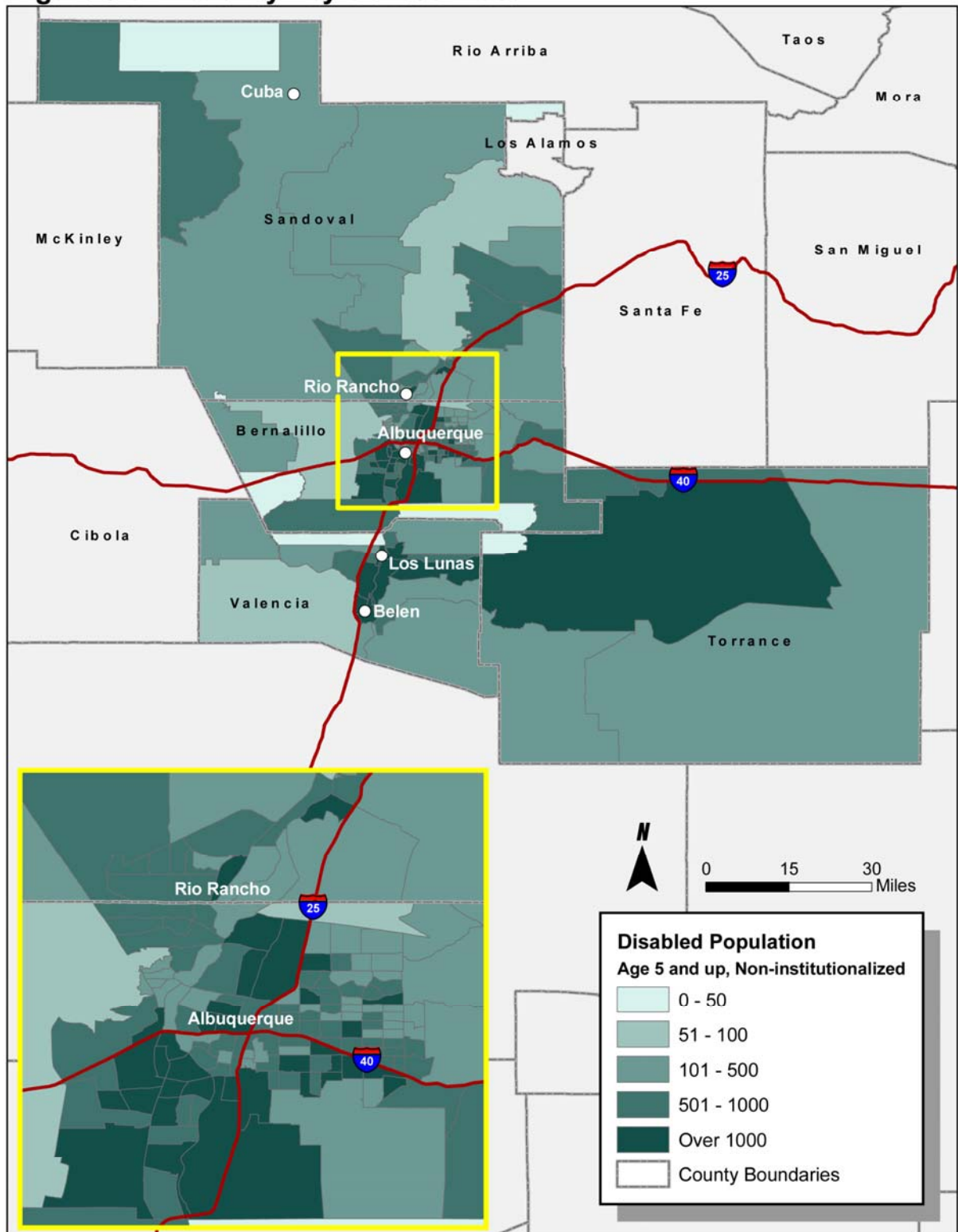
Figure 3-4 Poverty - by Census Tract



Nelson|Nygaard
consulting associates

GIS Data Source: ESRI, US Census 2000, RGIS
Location: Central New Mexico

Figure 3-5 Disability - by Census Tract



CHAPTER 4 “SNAPSHOT” OF PUBLIC TRANSIT – HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

This chapter provides a picture of service delivery for community transportation services within the four-county study area. As mentioned previously, the methodology employed to collect and synthesize this information was primarily conducted through a series of in-person or telephone interviews with organizations that fund, plan for and/or provide community transportation services within the region. Please note that it is not intended to reflect a comprehensive inventory of all community transportation programs and resources that might operate within the region.

Medicaid Transportation Programs

New Mexico Department of Human Services- Medical Assistance Division
Lovelace Community Health Plan
Molina Healthcare of New Mexico
Presbyterian Health Plan

State Agency Programs

New Mexico Commission for the Blind
New Mexico Workforce Training & Development
New Mexico Public Education Department – Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
New Mexico Department of Human Services - Income Support Division
New Mexico Department of Transportation –Transit and Rail Bureau
New Mexico Department of Aging and Long-Term Services
New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council

Local (county, city, other) Programs

City of Albuquerque
 ABQ RIDE
 Department of Senior Affairs
City of Belen
Bernalillo County
 Parks and Recreation Department
Village of Los Lunas
 Los Lunas Transit
Pueblo of Isleta
City of Rio Rancho
 Rio Transit
Sandoval County Senior Program
Torrance County
 Torrance County Project Office (TCPO TO GO) Transit
Valencia County
 Older American Program

Overview of Transportation Services

A brief description of these programs follows. In addition, Figures 4-1 through 4-3 in this chapter provide a quick comparison of the organizations. Figure 4-1 shows the geographic reach of each program.

Medicaid Transportation Programs

- **Fee-For-Service Medicaid Transportation.** The New Mexico Department of Human Services - Medical Assistance Division (MAD) provides transportation for Medicaid recipients who are enrolled in the Medicaid fee-for-service program but who are not members of a managed care program. Services are provided through certified Medicaid transportation providers, typically taxi operators, based on rates established by the State. Fee-for-service Medicaid recipients include Native Americans⁸ who have selected not to enroll in a Salud! program, and individuals who are dual enrolled in Medicaid and Medicare. Many dialysis patients have dual enrollment.
- **Salud! Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation.** Each of the Salud! Medicaid managed care organization (MCO) providers is responsible for providing transportation services for their patient/members. The three Salud! MCOs serving the four-county area (and the state) are Lovelace Community Health Plan, Molina Healthcare of New Mexico, and Presbyterian Health Plan. The Salud! MCO programs are reimbursed by the MAD for all services (including transportation) based on a capitated rate. Each of the MCO providers contracts with a private, for-profit transportation provider to provide demand responsive services. These transportation contractors either provide the service directly and/or utilize other transportation services. The primary contractor used by each of the MCOs is identified below.

Salud! Managed Care Organization

Lovelace Community Health Plan

Molina Healthcare of New Mexico

Presbyterian Health Plan

Primary Transportation Contractor

Superior Medical Transport (SMT)

Integrated Transportation Mgmt. (ITM)

Safe Ride Services

State of New Mexico Programs

- **New Mexico Commission for the Blind:** Funded with federal Department of Education funds, it provides transportation services to clients for educational or training opportunities. Funds are usually provided on a reimbursement basis, or bus fare is subsidized.
- **Governor's Office of Workforce Training and Development:** Funded through the United States Department of Labor, funds are used to support job training activities. Funds are provided to four local boards, which directly contract for services. The Mid-Region Council of Governments serves as the administrative entity for the Central New Mexico Board. The New Mexico Department of Labor is the service

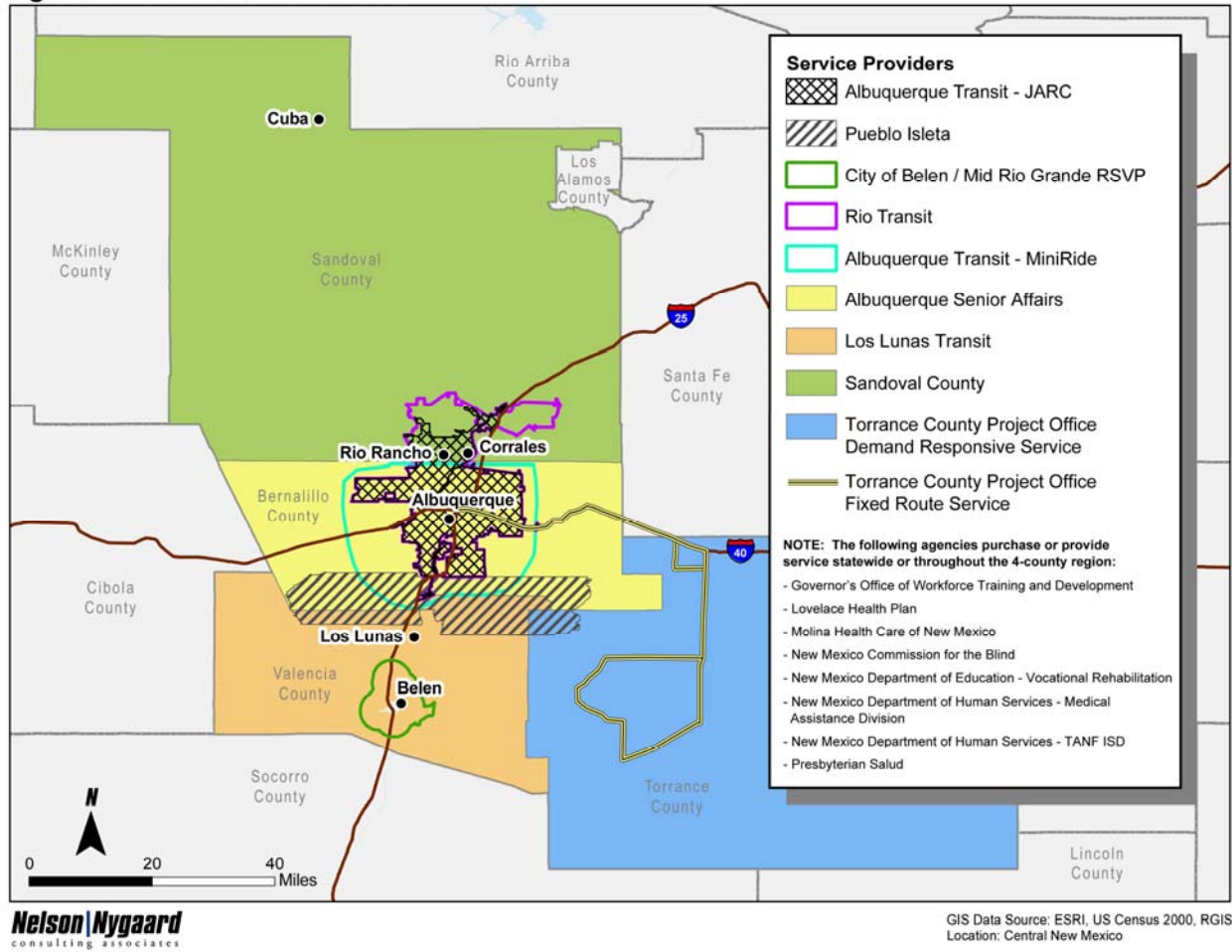
⁸ Approximately 20% of Native Americans select to enroll in a Salud Program, Source Medicaid Assistance Division.

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provider for adult and displaced workers, and Youth Development Inc. provides youth services.

- New Mexico Public Education Department—Division of Vocational Rehabilitation: Federal Department of Education funds are used to support two programs for persons with disabilities who are seeking employment: services funded through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Whatever It Takes (WIT) Program.
- Job Access Program: Funds provide transportation for low-income persons for work or related support services. The New Mexico Human Services Department—Income Support Division contracts with the New Mexico Department of Transportation to provide the services. Federal Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds support the program.
- New Mexico Department of Aging & Long-Term Services: Federal Department of Health and Human Service funds are used to support 65 programs throughout the state, including transportation for seniors and people with long-term disabilities. Most trips are provided locally in-house and are not contracted out.
- New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council: It does not provide transportation services; however, the agency's clientele does have need of specialized transportation services.

Figure 4-1 Transit Service Areas



County, City, Other Local

- **ABQ RIDE:** Operated by the City of Albuquerque Transit Department, this service offers fixed-route service, ADA complementary paratransit, and Job Access services. Funding for the JARC program comes from City general funds, other local matching fund contributors and FTA JARC funds.
- **City of Albuquerque Department of Senior Affairs:** The Department of Senior Affairs provides trips for seniors to meal sites and senior centers. Funding is provided from federal Older Americans Act, New Mexico Department of Aging & Long-Term Services, and City local general funds.
- **County of Valencia Mid-Rio Grand RSVP:** The City of Belen, under contract to Valencia County, operates the Mid-Rio Grande Service for anyone in need of a ride within a three-mile radius of Belen, and in Rio Communities. Funding is provided through FTA Section 5311 funds, and local general funds.
- **Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation Department:** This directly-operated service transports seniors for specific purposes. Ninety percent of trips are provided from seniors' homes to seven participating county meal sites. The remainder of the rides are for recreational field trips. Funding comes from the Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation general fund.
- **Los Lunas Transit:** This door-to-door service operates within Valencia County. Funding is provided from FTA Section 5311 funds. Some job access service is also provided using FTA JARC funds.
- **Pueblo of Isleta:** The pueblo operates four transportation programs, including services for the elderly, community health, recreation, and social services. Senior program funding is derived from Older Americans Act, New Mexico Department of Aging & Long-Term Services, and local revenues generated from the Pueblo.
- **Rio Transit:** Operated by the City of Rio Rancho this paratransit system serves seniors and ADA eligible persons aged 18 and older. Funding is generated through FTA Section 5310 funds, and City local general funds.
- **Sandoval County:** The County operates a transportation service for seniors and disabled adults within Sandoval County. Most trips go into the cities of Rio Rancho and Albuquerque. Funding used to support the program includes Older Americans Act, New Mexico Department of Aging & Long -Term Services and FTA Section 5311 funds.⁹

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- ⁹ The Sandoval County Transportation Coordination Study, completed in 2003, included an inventory of the transportation services provided by the ten Sandoval County tribal communities. Major findings include:
 - There are nine tribal transportation providers, including five Pueblos, three Navajo Chapters, and the Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos Inc..
 - The tribal programs utilized 66 vehicles to operate transportation services for Senior, Head Start, and a variety of medical programs.
 - The Torreon Navajo Chapter operates the most vehicles (15), followed by Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos (14), San Felipe Pueblo (12), and Jemez Pueblo (10).
 - Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos Inc. serves four of the Pueblos, providing Head Start transportation (at Cochiti, Sandia, Santa Ana, and Zia Pueblos), Senior transportation (at Santa

- Torrance County: The County provides a fixed-route transit and commuter service, and a demand-responsive service. Funding is provided through Medicaid, Job Access and Reverse Commute, and local county funds.

Customers of Community Transportation Services

Customers of community transportation services are those who are unable to transport themselves due to their age, income or health condition. For purposes of this plan, these customers include those considered to be low-income of any age, older adults, or persons with disabilities. To some extent, there is overlap among these groups. For example, seniors are more likely to be disabled than younger people, and the presence of a disabling condition increases with age. Persons with a disability are also more likely than other segments of the population to be of low-income status. For the entire state of New Mexico, for example, 24 percent of all persons with a disability reported income below the federal poverty level compared to a rate of 17 percent of persons in poverty for persons who are without a disability.

Likewise, there might be some overlap in the types of transportation services that assist these constituency groups. Most trips in the region—and elsewhere in this country—are taken by private automobile. Persons who cannot take their trips by automobile, due to disabling condition, frailty, or lack of access, need to seek out other options to get the transportation they need. These options might be provided in a number of ways, as described below.

- Public transit offers fixed-route services, typically in urbanized areas, within a defined service area, along pre-designed routes, during specified hours of the day, with pre-established frequencies. Federal law (ADA) requires that these fixed-route services be made accessible for persons with disabilities, including those in wheelchairs. Since the passage of the ADA in 1990, buses and rail vehicles have been equipped with lifts or ramps to enable persons in wheelchairs to access the vehicle. Other accommodations to address accessibility have been made as well. For example, motor coach drivers (or through an automated voice announcement system) are required to announce stops at major intersections. Also upon request, drivers must help persons who are blind or visually impaired to better navigate the public transit system.
- Even with these accommodations, some persons with disabilities cannot make use of the system. This may be due to the severity of their disability, or because their disability prevents them from navigating their way to or from transit services. For these persons, ADA paratransit is available. ADA paratransit programs are required to complement the fixed-route service by providing services along the same routes, and during the same hours of service. ADA paratransit programs do not necessarily

Ana, Sandia, and Zia Pueblos), and medical transportation through Community Health Representatives (at Sandia, Santa Ana, and Zia Pueblos). Two of the Navajo Chapters (Torreon and Ojo Encino) also operate school bus transportation to their Chapters' elementary and mid-schools.

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respond to the transportation needs of all persons with disabilities because some will require a higher level of service than what is required to be provided by ADA. In addition, some individuals might need service outside the designated service area, and some might need service when it isn't available.

- Many human service agencies directly provide, or arrange through contract, transportation for their clients. Some arrangements specific to the study area are described further in this report.
- Some agencies reimburse clients to arrange their own transportation, which might include covering the cost of public transit, or expenses related to owning and operating a vehicle.

Figure 4-2 presents more information about customers / clients transported by transportation service. An individual may be eligible for transportation services from more than one program.

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Figure 4-2 Organizations and Eligible Populations

Organization	Type of Transportation Service	Seniors	Low-Income	Medicaid	Disabled	General Public
Medicaid Programs						
N.M. Human Services Dept – Medical Assistance Division	Contracted		X	X		
Lovelace Community Health Plan	Contracted		X	X		
Molina Healthcare of New Mexico	Contracted		X	X		
Presbyterian Health Plan	Contracted		X	X		
State Agencies						
N.M. Commission for the Blind	Stipends				X	
N.M. Workforce Training and Development	Stipends		X			
N.M. Dept of Education — Vocational Rehabilitation	Stipends, Contracts				X	
N.M. Human Services Dept – Income Support Division (TANF) and NM Dept of Transportation – Transit and Rail Bureau (JARC)	Contracted		X			
N.M. Dept of Aging & Long-Term Services	Contracted	X				
City/County/Local						
ABQ RIDE – Mini Ride	Provider				X	
ABQ RIDE – JARC	Provider		X			
Albuquerque Senior Affairs Department	Provider	X				
City of Belen RSVP	Provider					X
Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation Department	Provider	X				
Los Lunas Transit	Provider	X	x		X	X
Pueblo of Isleta	Provider	X				Residents
Rio Transit	Provider	X			X (adults)	
Sandoval County Senior Program	Provider	X	X			
Torrance County	Provider		X			X

Ridership and Cost Statistics

Figure 4-3 presents ridership and cost information for the organizations interviewed. It is important to note that not all agencies maintain records on transportation expenditures; in addition, some of those interviewed did not have budget information available for this report. Therefore, the amount of funding expended on community transportation is an estimate, and most likely understated due to the lack of information from some programs. In addition, administrative costs and in-kind contributions (for example, staff driving vehicles while rides are billed to other agency services) are often not included in the costs.

- At least 1.15 million community transportation trips are served annually in the four-county area. This total is a conservative estimate because ridership figures were not available for all organizations interviewed, and not all agencies providing community services were interviewed.
- Of the 1.15 million trips, Medicaid NEMT ridership accounted for 207,000 trips, or 18 percent of the region's trips. Trips provided by other state agencies accounted for 570,000 trips, or 50 percent of the region's trips, and municipal services accounted for 374,000 trips, or 32 percent of the region's trips.
- We estimate that at a range of between \$15 million to \$19¹⁰ million is spent annually in the four-county region on community transportation. As with the ridership estimate, expenditures were not available from all agencies interviewed and not all agencies providing community services were interviewed.
- Of these funds, approximately \$8 million is spent on Medicaid transportation, about \$4.4 million by other state agencies, and about \$6.5 million is spent by city, county or other local entities.
- Of the organizations that did provide cost data for Medicaid NEMT services, the unit cost of service would appear to range from \$28.23 (NMDHS-MAD) to \$83.04 (Molina) per one-way trip.

¹⁰ Some preliminary budget estimates may reflect duplicative services; for this reason, a range is provided.

Figure 4-3 Trips and Operating Costs by Agency

Name of Organization & Program		Estimated Annual Trips	Annual Cost	Cost per Trip
Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) Programs				
N.M. Human Services Dept – Medical Assistance Division	Bernalillo	38331	\$573,092	\$14.95
	Sandoval	13878	\$883,248	\$63.64
	Torrance	1043	\$55,338	\$53.06
	Valencia	3493	\$90,273	\$25.84
Lovelace Community Health Plan	Superior Medical Transport	34,635	not available	—
	Not including SMT		\$3,443,747	
	Escorts	unknown	\$305,129	
Molina Healthcare of New Mexico	Non-emergency Ambulance Trips	839	\$2,643,322	\$83.04
	Reimbursed Mileage	9,712		
	All other trips (Including reimbursed mileage)	21,281		
Presbyterian Health Plan		83,459	not available	—
Subtotal - Medicaid NEMT		206,671	\$ 7,994,149	
State Agencies				
N.M. Commission for the Blind	Bernalillo	N/A: this includes mileage or transit ticket reimbursement	\$27,152	—
	Sandoval		\$5,824	
	Torrance		\$0.00	
	Valencia		\$241	
N.M. Workforce Training & Development		unknown	unknown	—
N.M. Dept of Education – Vocational Rehab. *	WIT	unknown	\$49,200	—
	DVR		\$360,800	
N.M. Human Services Dept – Income Support Division and N.M. Department of Transportation – Transit and Rail Bureau	TANF	37,724	\$668,242	\$17.71
	JARC	200,000	\$1,731,758	\$8.66
N.M. Department of Aging and Long Term Services*		332,175	\$1,550,010	\$4.67
Subtotal - Other State Agencies		569,899	\$ 4,393,226	
County/City/Local				
ABQ RIDE	JARC	187,603	\$4,800,000	\$25.59
	Mini Ride			
Albuquerque Senior Affairs		91,451	\$653,800	\$7.15
City of Belen RSVP		4611	\$42,962	\$9.32
Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation Department		12,000	unknown	—
Los Lunas Transit	JARC	1145	\$414,248	\$15.98
	TANF	2407		
	5311	22372		
Pueblo of Isleta		3,824	not available	—
Rio Transit		15,214	\$343,504	\$22.58
Sandoval County Senior Program		31,000	\$139,500	\$4.50
Torrance County	Demand Responsive	1,898	\$58,208	\$30.67
	Fixed Route			
Subtotal - County/City/Local Services		373,525	\$ 6,452,222	
TOTAL		1,150,095	18,839,598	

*For these agencies, we were given statewide values; the values presented for the 4-county area are estimated at 41% of the statewide values based on the fact that 41% of the state's population resides in these counties. Preliminary funding estimates for NM Department of Aging and Long Term Services and NM Job Access Program may reflect duplicative services with local programs listed below.

Figure 4-4 Agency Snapshot

Name of Organization & Program		Clientele/Purposes Served	Service Area	Funding Sources
Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) Programs				
N.M. Human Services Dept – Medical Assistance Division		Medicaid Eligible, for medical appointments	Statewide	Medicaid
Lovelace Community Health Plan		Medicaid Eligible, for medical appointments	Statewide	Medicaid
Molina Healthcare of New Mexico		Medicaid Eligible, for medical appointments	Statewide	Medicaid
Presbyterian Health Plan		Medicaid Eligible, for medical appointments	Statewide	Medicaid
State Agencies				
N.M. Commission for the Blind		Persons needing educational or training opportunities that will directly lead to gainful employment	Statewide	Department of Education Funds
N.M. Workforce Training & Development		Job Training Activities	Statewide	Department of Labor
N.M. Dept of Education – Vocational Rehab.	WIT	Persons with disabilities who are seeking employment	Statewide	Federal Department of Education
	DVR			78.7% DOE, 23.3% NMDOE match
N.M. Human Services Dept – Income Support Division and N.M. Department of Transportation – Transit and Rail Bureau		Persons eligible for the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Program and their eligible dependents	Statewide	TANF Federal Block Grant, JARC funds
N.M. Department of Aging and Long Term Services		Seniors age 60 and over, for any purpose	Statewide	Federal Department on Aging
County/City/Local				
ABQ RIDE	JARC	Low income residents for work related trips	Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Corrales, town of Bernalillo, and Most of Bernalillo County	FTA JARC Grant (\$1 mil in 2000, still using)
	Mini Ride	ADA Paratransit Customers	Albuquerque Region	Fare revenues, Gross Receipts Tax, FTA
Albuquerque Senior Affairs		Seniors (over the age of 60)	City of Albuquerque, Bernalillo County	City of Albuquerque, Area Agency on Aging, donated fares
City of Belen RSVP		No restrictions-public	Within 3 miles of Belen, and Rio Communities	5311
Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation Department		Seniors	Albuquerque, Bernalillo County Area	General funds
Los Lunas Transit		JARC, ADA, and general public mingled	Valencia County except Belen	Fare revenues, 3037 (JARC), FTA 5311 funds
Pueblo of Isleta		Various Programs available to different residents	Albuquerque Region	1/3 Fed (Older Americans Ast), 1/3 State, and 1/3 local revues
Rio Transit		Seniors and ADA eligible	Any purpose in Rio Rancho, limited trips in Albuquerque, Placitas, Bernalillo, and Corrales	Revenues, City General Fund, 5310
Sandoval County Senior Program		Seniors and disabled adults	Albuquerque Region and Sandoval County	5311, Title III-B, county
Torrance County Project Office	Demand Responsive	Medicaid Exempt, Maternal Child Health (MCH), general public	Torrance County & Moriarty School District	5311
	Fixed Route	General public		JARC (5316), MCH, Medicaid

Other Key Findings

- A total of 18 different funding sources were identified that support human services transportation: eight sources are derived from federal programs, four from state programs, and six from a variety of local funds.
- All programs surveyed utilize at least one source of federal funding, often in combination with other local sources of funds.
- Those programs funded with federal dollars are more likely to have stricter eligibility standards for using the funds associated with them than non-federally funded programs.
- Medicaid transportation services are provided to Medicaid eligible persons through four different transportation programs. Three managed care organizations arrange for services, as does the State of New Mexico Human Services Department-Medical Assistance Division, which arranges for the fee-for-service or non-managed care aspect of the program.
- Three public agencies (ABQ RIDE, Los Lunas Transit, Rio Transit) provide dial-a-ride or paratransit services that, in part, serve persons with disabilities. In the case of ABQ RIDE, the paratransit service meets the agency's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit obligation.
- Six different State of New Mexico agencies subsidize transportation for their clients. In all cases, services are provided state-wide.
- Of the 19 organizations that arrange for or provide transportation for their clients or constituents, nine (40 percent) operate service directly, while the others contract for or otherwise reimburse the cost of transportation for their clients.

CHAPTER 5 SERVICE DUPLICATION AND UNMET NEEDS

Key Regional Travel Patterns

Major origins, destinations and service gaps are illustrated in Figure 5-1. The information illustrated in Figure 5-1 is derived from the interviews with the 20 organizations, referred to earlier. Hard data on trip origins and destinations from each of the community transportation service providers were generally unavailable for analysis.

From Figure 5-1, we see that while most trip origins and destinations are in Albuquerque, there are a significant number of trip origins in portions of the South Valley (especially from communities located along the I-25 corridor) and in Bernalillo, Corrales, Placitas, and Rio Rancho. In Torrance County, most trips origins and destinations are along the fixed-route corridors of Torrance County Project Office's fixed-route service. Several customers in Torrance County use this service to commute to Edgewood and Albuquerque.

Most medical trips within the service area involve transportation to or from medical services and facilities within Albuquerque, because there are no hospitals and few specialty medical facilities in the outlying counties of the region.

Most senior transportation program trips are intra-county trips to senior program meal sites.

Service Duplication

Anecdotal comments from the interviews suggest that there might be a potentially high degree of duplication of medical trips, owing to (1) there being a concentration of medical facilities and services in Albuquerque, and (2) there being no coordination between the four different Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) service delivery systems (New Mexico Department of Human Services- Medical Assistance Division, Lovelace Community Health Plan, Molina Health Plan, and Presbyterian Health Plan). Other comments indicate that there is also no coordination among all the other programs (ADA, senior) that provide transportation to these medical facilities and service.

Together, the four Medicaid NEMT programs account for nearly half the funds expended in the four-county area. Each operates independently of the others, although it is likely that their clients are accessing the same medical facilities or program services.

Unmet Needs

Despite the provision of accessible and other community-based transportation through numerous programs, the need exists for more—or different types—of services. The need for expanded community transportation programs will be exacerbated as the population ages over the next ten to twenty years. Unmet transportation needs can generally be categorized as follows:

Spatial gaps: Unserved or underserved areas as identified through the interview process are illustrated in Figure 5-1. Not surprisingly, these areas are located in the more rural regions of the study area. And while there are publicly-funded transit services and demand-

responsive services that are serving some of the outlying counties, the supply of service is out-stripped by the need, according to the interviewees. Areas with noted gaps in service include pueblos and rural areas in Sandoval County, areas of Valencia County south of Belen, and most of Torrance County. The City of Rio Rancho, which had a population of over 66,000 in 2005,¹¹ does not have a transportation system for the general public. We suspect that there might be an unmet transportation need for individuals who do not meet the eligibility requirements for the Rio Transit demand responsive system, which serves residents over 55 years of age and those with disabilities 18 years old or older.

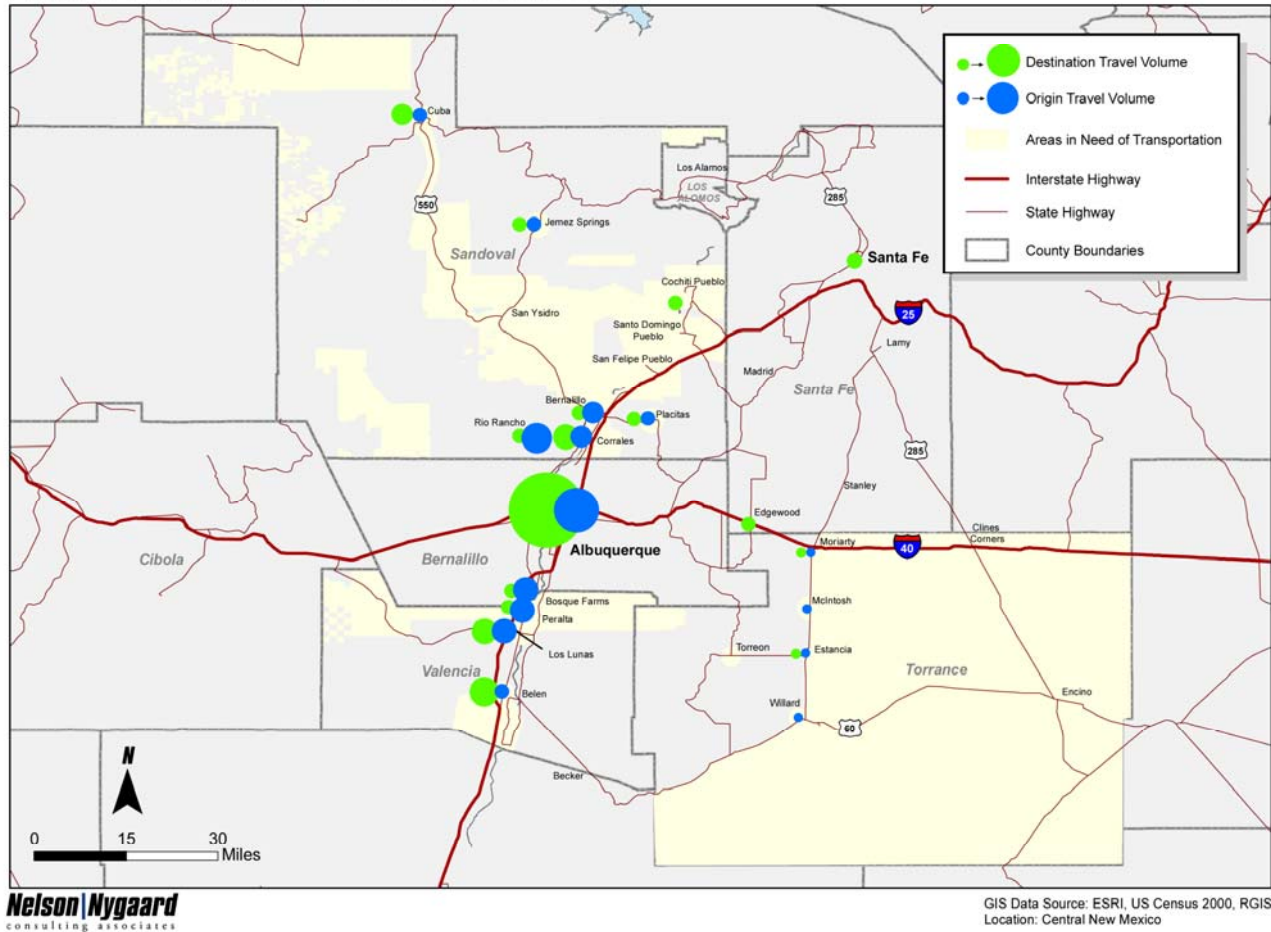
For Medicaid non-emergency medical transportation, there are no geographic barriers from the clients' perspective: qualifying clients are assured a ride even though it might be a long and inconvenient trip. However, for people who do not qualify for Medicaid, the options for trips to medical services are more limited geographically. For example, the demand-response service operated by the Torrance County Project Office does not serve trips beyond their respective county limits, although most medical facilities and services are in Albuquerque.

Temporal gaps: Another type of service gap relates to when transportation services are available. Many ADA paratransit services cease operating in the evenings and on weekends, a limitation that restricts access to public transit for persons who need to travel during non-traditional service hours. For instance, while ABQ RIDE runs until after 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday and until 7 p.m. on Sunday, Rio Transit service does not have weekend service, and schedules its last weekday pick-ups by 3 p.m. It is also important to note that providers of TANF and Medicaid Non Emergency Medical Transportation services are set up to provide service 24 hours a day.

Programmatic and level-of-service gaps: Access to many programs is based on program eligibility. Those persons who do not qualify for a specialized program might "fall through the cracks" and not be able to take advantage of existing programs or services. Furthermore, the types of service available might not necessarily meet the needs of persons who need to use it. For example, curb-to-curb ADA paratransit service might not meet the needs of certain customers who need door-to-door if not door-through-door service.

¹¹ From <http://www.city-data.com/city/Rio-Rancho-New-Mexico.html>, accessed 10/20/2006

Figure 5-1 Origins, Destinations and Service Gaps



Trip purpose restrictions: In some cases, access to destinations might be restricted due to limitations placed by the funding source on the types of trips that can be funded. For example, JARC, TANF, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (New Mexico Department of Education), and Work Force Investment funds are all intended to support access to work or training activities. Even if a person is eligible for those programs, they might not be able to use transportation for other types of trips they need, such as for shopping, recreation, or medical purposes. In some cases, the restrictions are very specific, such as for ABQ RIDE’s JARC program where funding does not cover trips for job interviews. Likewise, Medicaid-funded programs provide trips to obtain Medicaid-authorized medical benefits from authorized medical providers only, and must turn away requests for trips to, say, chiropractor appointments. Some senior programs restrict trips for meal-programs or other senior center related activities, though some of their clients are in need of trips for medical purposes.

Cost of transportation: For many low-income persons, the cost of purchasing transportation—either a monthly bus pass or daily fares—can be difficult, especially if they need to purchase multiple fares for children or other family members. The cost of an ADA paratransit trip can be up to twice the cost of a regular bus trip.

CHAPTER 6 FUNDING SOURCES

As mentioned previously, a total of 18 different funding sources have been identified as supporting community transportation services. These can be categorized into federal, state, or local sources of funding. More detail is provided below.

Federal Funding

Each of the organizations included in this analysis receives federal funds of some sort to support their operations. Federal funds for community transportation are authorized or provided through various federal departments, including Education, Health and Human Services, Labor, and Transportation. Ironically, more transportation funding for social service transportation programs is provided through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services than through the U.S. Department of Transportation.

A summary of the various sources of federal funds and the local recipients of these funds is included as Figure 6-1.

Figure 6-1 Federal Funding to Support New Mexico Community Transportation Programs

Program Name	Funding Method	Local Recipients
U.S. Department of Education		
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	Formula/Block grants	NM Public Education Dept . (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation), NM Commission for the Blind
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	Special Demonstration Discretionary Funds	US Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services		
Supportive Services and Senior Centers (Title III-B)	Formula/Block grants	Albuquerque Senior Affairs, Sandoval County, Pueblo of Isleta
TANF	Formula/Block grants	Los Lunas Transit, NM Job Access Program, ABQ RIDE
Medicaid	Formula/Block grants	Lovelace Community Health Plan, Molina Health Plan, NM Dept of Human Services- Medical Assistance Division, Torrance County, Presbyterian Health Plan
U.S. Department of Labor		
Workforce Investment Act Programs	Formula/Block grants	Office of Workforce Training & Development
U.S. Department of Transportation		
JARC	Formula (2)	ABQ RIDE, NM Job Access Program, Los Lunas Transit, Torrance County
Non urbanized Formula Transit Grants (5311)	Formula/Block grants	City of Belen, Los Lunas Transit, Sandoval County
Transit Capital Assistance for Elderly/Disabled (5310)	Formula/Block grants	Rio Transit

State Funding

Many federal programs require that the state provide matching funds to supplement the federal dollars. Of agencies interviewed for this study, these include Medicaid and Vocational Rehabilitation Programs.

Figure 6-2 State Funding to Support New Mexico Specialized Transportation Programs

Program Name	Local Recipients
N. M. Public Education Department	
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation local offices, Commission for the Blind
N . M. Department of Human Services	
Medical Assistance Division	Lovelace Community Health Plan, Molina Health Plan, Presbyterian Health Plan, Medical Assistance Division

Local Funding

To round out the funding picture, some programs utilize locally generated funds to support their programs. These typically include general funds for city-based programs, and fares from public transit agencies. A summary of these funding sources and their application is below:

Figure 6-3 Local Funding to Support New Mexico Specialized Transportation Programs

Funding Source	Local Recipients
City/County General Funds	City of Belen, Bernalillo County, Sandoval County, Rio Transit, ABQ RIDE
Fares/Donations	ABQ RIDE, Albuquerque Senior Affairs, Los Lunas Transit

Federal Sources of Funding

Passage of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) has resulted in some changes in the ways federal funding will be available for community transportation programs. First, JARC funds will no longer be distributed based on Congressional discretion (“earmark”). Job Access and Reverse Commute funds will be distributed to states by formula, based on that state’s incidence of persons in poverty. The “New Freedom Program” is a new source of funding for programs serving persons with disabilities. New Freedom Program funds will also be distributed to states on a formula basis. Both New Freedom and JARC funds will then be awarded to sub-recipients through a competitive selection process. Projects funded through JARC, New Freedom and the Section 5310 Program must be derived from a Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan.

Existing Transportation Regulations, Policies and Procedures

Each of the organizations in the four-county region that either directly provides or arranges for transportation for a specialized clientele relies on more than one source of funding to carry out its services. Each also uses some source of federal funding, whether through the U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, or the U.S. Department of Labor. Regulations attached to these programs impose restrictions on eligible recipients, riders, or trip purposes; prescribe planning processes; or set requirements for local matching funds.

It is important to have an understanding of the types of requirements associated with these sources of funds in order to better grapple with the challenge of service coordination among the various programs. A summary of some regulations, policies and/or procedures is provided below.

Figure 6-4 Sources of Funds and Related Program Requirements

U.S. Department of Education	
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	Funds utilized for transportation purposes by NM Dept of Education-Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, NM Commission for the Blind. Funds serve persons with disabilities enrolled in programs with a goal of paid employment, job training, job seeking, job retention, or job placement. Funds are tied to individual service plans, based on the individual's choice of service mode.
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	
Supportive Services and Senior Centers (Title III-B)	These funds are utilized for transportation purposes by Albuquerque Senior Affairs, Sandoval County, and the Pueblo of Isleta. The Older Americans Act prohibits charging a fare for transportation, but donations may be solicited. Funds received from the Older Americans Act must be used to transport senior citizens.
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families	Funds utilized for transportation purposes by Los Lunas Transit, NM Job Access Program, and ABQ RIDE. Federal regulations require that TANF funds be spent for services for TANF eligible and TANF recipients; therefore, pre-authorization is required for TANF recipients needing transportation. TANF funds have been used as a match for JARC funds; however, availability of funds has been curtailed and they are no longer available for this purpose.
Medicaid	Medicaid transportation services are provided by Lovelace Community Health Plan, Molina Health Plan, N.M. Department of Human Services- Medical Assistance Division, Torrance County, and Presbyterian Health Plan. In most cases, transportation is restricted for non-emergency medical purposes for Medicaid enrolled persons through Medicaid enrolled providers of service. Federal funds are matched with state funds. The state establishes a reimbursement rate and other administrative requirements, including certification standards. Trips are required to be pre-authorized to ensure services are delivered only to Medicaid eligible persons.
U.S. Department of Labor	
Workforce Investment Act Programs	WIA funds are used by the Office of Workforce Training & Development to support transportation for their clients. Funds are primarily used to pay for vouchers for public transit or to reimburse clients for use of their private automobile. U.S. DOL regulations stipulate that funds cannot duplicate service that already exists. Cost-sharing is also not allowed unless the use of U.S. DOL funds could be documented as targeted to U.S. DOL clients.

Department of Transportation	
Job Access and Reverse Commute	JARC funds are intended to be used to assist recipients of public assistance or other low-income individuals to access employment and training opportunities. Within the four-county service area, they are currently used by ABQ RIDE, N.M. Job Access Program, Los Lunas Transit, and Torrance County. The passage of SAFETEA-LU resulted in the distribution of JARC funds by formula, rather than by an earmark approach. JARC funds can provide 80 percent of the cost of capital projects, and 50 percent of a project's operating cost, up to an established maximum amount. Matching funds can come from other federal (non DOT) programs or from local sources of funds.
Urbanized Area Formula Grants (5307)	ABQ RIDE uses Section 5307 funds, which can provide 80 percent of the cost of a capital project, up to an established maximum amount, and can be used to fund planning and technical costs.
Non-urbanized Formula Transit Grants (5311)	Section 5311 funds can be used for planning, capital, operating and administrative assistance in non-urbanized areas. Up to 80 percent of capital costs and 50 percent of operating projects costs, up to an established maximum amount, can be covered with these federal dollars. A local match is required for the remaining project costs. The City of Belen, Los Lunas Transit, and Sandoval County use these funds.

CHAPTER 7 COORDINATION – EXISTING INSTANCES OF COORDINATION

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation through Medicaid and MCO Programs

Medicaid-sponsored non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) in New Mexico is funded through the New Mexico Department of Human Services and is provided by the Medical Assistance Division (NMHSD-MAD), as well as through three Managed Care Organizations (MCOs): Molina Health Plan, Lovelace Community Health Plan, and Presbyterian Health Plan. Currently, none of these agencies coordinates transportation services with one another. All three MCOs contract with different sub-contractors, each of whom in turn might assign an NEMT trip to transit, a taxi, a volunteer driver, or a MCO provider. However, the MCOs primarily utilize their own fleets. NMHSD-MAD currently utilizes a network of providers. It is possible that some of the MCO contractors might combine a ride-sharable NEMT trip that comes from its MCO with a NEMT trip that comes from NMHSD-MAD. However, any possible “savings” that could stem from such a grouping would not be passed along to NMHSD-MAD because contractors that bill per trip do not have shared rates, while other contractors receive a fixed month fee and do not bill per trip at all. NMHSD-MAD also reimburses for mileage and provides vouchers for some public transit service.

Other Statewide Programs

Of the statewide programs for which information was obtained, those that provide funding or service are the following: the Governor’s Office of Workforce Training and Development, the New Mexico Public Education Department - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the New Mexico Department of Human Services-Income Support Division (NMHSD-ISD), and the New Mexico Aging & Long-Term Services Department. None of these agencies have coordinated with other programs, although NMHSD-ISD coordinates its JARC service among 19 providers through central administration, and cross referrals are sometimes made between the Aging & Long-Term Services Department and the Medicaid transportation programs, as described above. The New Mexico Public Education Department – Division of Vocational Rehabilitation – Whatever It Takes program has coordinated transportation for other providers with the stipulation that a WIT client must be a rider in the shared transportation.

Regional, County, and Local Programs

Bernalillo County & Greater Albuquerque Area – Of the agencies interviewed, those providing transportation services in Bernalillo County and the greater Albuquerque Area include ABQ RIDE, ABQ RIDE Mini Ride, ABQ RIDE Job Access, the City of Albuquerque Department of Senior Affairs, Rio Transit in Rio Rancho, and Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation Department. Two of these, the Albuquerque Department of Senior Affairs and Rio Transit, currently make attempts at coordination and have worked with each other as well as with the Jewish Family Services Transportation Program and Catholic Community Services in the Albuquerque area.

Sandoval County -- Sandoval County operates a transportation service for seniors and disabled adults within the county. Other service provided in Sandoval County is primarily in the south central part of the county where Rio Transit and ABQ RIDE provide service, as discussed above

Torrance County -- The Torrance County Project Office's (TCPO) Transit operation coordinates with ABQ RIDE to make connections between programs. TCPO Transit already does co-mingle trips from various programs within the county, such as between their Maternal and Child Health clients, disabled clients, and Medicaid exempt clients. They note that there are no other Medicaid-exempt transportation services within the county with which to coordinate.

Valencia County -- There are three community transportation providers in Valencia County: Pueblo of Isleta, Los Lunas Transit, and City of Belen RSVP. Valencia County Senior Center provides service for seniors, primarily to meal sites, and might work with Los Lunas Transit in the future. Los Lunas and Belen are considering a coordinated plan for vehicle transfer, where a pick-up/drop-off point would be created mid-way between the cities. Beyond this, there has not been much consideration of coordination in the area.

Prospective Participation and Obstacles

NEMT through Medicaid and MCO Programs

One of the major concerns expressed by these agencies is that all transportation vendors must be registered Medicaid providers and have current and valid operating authorities issued by the New Mexico Public Regulation Committee. This limits the number of providers throughout the state who would be able to participate in coordination. The other main requirement of Medicaid providers is the federal stipulation that Medicaid transportation cannot be provided if it can otherwise be provided for free or at a lesser cost. Representatives from the NMHSD-MAD pointed out that this policy might impede full coordination efforts by placing emphasis on non-demand responsive alternatives such as fixed route or volunteer driving. On the other hand, they point out that recent interpretation of federal policy also encourages the establishment of brokerages that would result in cost sharing. All four Medicaid agencies mentioned that they could see the benefits of coordination, in particular for serving long distance trips, and Lovelace and NMHSD- MAD both specifically mentioned the possibility of a centralized brokerage for improving efficiency.

Other Statewide Programs

The four state-level agencies mentioned above -- The Governor's Office of Workforce Training and Development, the New Mexico Public Education Department-Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the New Mexico Human Services Department-Income Support Division (ISD), and the New Mexico Aging & Long-Term Services Department -- cited duplication of transportation service as an existing concern within the agencies. Two of the agencies mentioned smart-card technology as one means of ensuring that trips would be billed to the correct funding streams if trips were provided by using shared vehicles..

Major obstacles to coordination that were mentioned included the lack of funding and the constraints associated with funding. For example, TANF and Workforce Investment Act limit the ways that funding can be spent, and federal DOL regulations stipulate that funds cannot be used to duplicate existing services. However, all four agencies indicated an interest in pursuing coordination at this level.

Regional, County, and Local Programs

Bernalillo County & Greater Albuquerque Area – All of the agencies in Albuquerque and Bernalillo County expressed an interest in coordination. However, they cite several barriers, including geographic boundaries, reporting requirements, and, most importantly, funding restrictions and lack of funding.

Sandoval County – In 2003, the Sandoval County Commissioners adopted a Transportation Coordination Plan that reviewed all the transportation services in the county. Sandoval County continues to work on implementing some strategies identified through this study. The primary barriers to increased coordination between these agencies and other types of coordination, from the perspective of Sandoval County staff, focus on two things: 1) funding-related limitations, such as the inability to bill Medicaid, and 2) stipulations that restrict the possibility of shared use of vehicles for trips funded by different funding streams.

Torrance County – Torrance County Project Office Transit is open to further coordination efforts.

Valencia County – Los Lunas Transit and City of Belen RSVP cite financial constraints as a major barrier to further coordination.

CHAPTER 8 COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT – HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

As described earlier in this document, SAFETEA-LU requires a locally developed coordinated public transit – human services transportation plan (CTP) that directs how the FTA administered Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310), Job Access and Reverse Commute (Section 5316), and New Freedom (Section 5317) program funds can be spent. While the current draft CTP for this region only applies to these three specific FTA administered programs, it is clearly the intent of SAFETEA-LU and the Federal Interagency Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility, through the United We Ride program, to have a CTP that includes other entities that provide or fund community transportation services. This CTP for Sandoval, Bernalillo, Valencia, and Tarrant counties needs to be viewed as one of the initial steps in the transportation coordination effort. Another initial step will be the forthcoming recommendations of the United We Ride – New Mexico project and a broader-based CTP for this four-county area.

Recommended Uses of Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310), Job Access and Reverse Commute (Section 5316), and New Freedom (Section 5317) Program Funds and Grant Recipient Requirements

1. Recipients of FTA Section 5310, 5316 and 5317 program funds will fully participate in the United We Ride – New Mexico program by:
 - a. Participating in the implementation of the recommendations of the United We Ride – New Mexico program
 - b. Participating in establishing uniform definitions, standards and procedures for the tracking and reporting of ridership and operating costs
 - c. Sharing vehicles for client trips, where feasible
2. Establish a regional mobility manager or similar structure
3. To support current transportation services and fill transportation service “gaps”, such as:
 - a. Lack of late-night and weekend service
 - b. Insufficient guaranteed ride home service
 - c. Inadequate shuttle / feeder service
 - d. Insufficient demand response service
 - e. Inadequate voucher program

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- f. Insufficient ridesharing and carpooling activities
- 4. Promote community transportation services, such as:
 - a. The use of transit by workers with non-traditional work schedules
 - b. The use of transit voucher programs
 - c. Development of employer-provided transportation
 - d. The use of transit pass programs and the benefits allowed under the Internal Revenue Code
- 5. Operational planning and/or implementation of intelligent transportation technologies/systems.
- 6. Enhancing public transportation services beyond minimum requirements of the ADA
- 7. New public transportation alternatives that are beyond minimum requirements of the ADA
- 8. Transit related aspects of bicycling
- 9. Expanding fixed-route public transit routes